



The scene at Mildenhall on the arrival of the King, with a background of Hinds and Heyfords.

THERE has never been anything quite like King Edward's first inspection of Royal Air Force stations. Of course, he travelled by air; he used to do that as Prince of Wales, and it was doubly suitable that he should do so now that he is Sovereign of the Force which he was visiting. What was surprising was the contrast of the reality with what one would have pictured as likely to happen. A Royal inspection suggests a pageant of the air, with the King and his staff in one aeroplane, the Duke of York and his staff, perhaps, in another, the Chief of the Air Staff and his entourage possibly following in a troop-carrier, and a whole wing of fighter squadrons escorting the Royal party to protect them from harm.

What actually happened was that the King, the Duke, and the C.A.S. all travelled together in the King's Dragon Rapide, with Flt. Lt. Fielden as pilot, and with no escort of any sort. It came almost as a shock to spectators to see that one rather small aeroplane appear in the sky and circle over the aerodrome before landing, and to realise that it contained the greatest King in the world, together with the Heir Presumptive and the chief officer of the Force which was being inspected. But that is King Edward's way. To adapt a homely saying, he cuts the cackle and gets to the aeroplanes.

It was also noticeable that the King and the Duke of York wore the new pattern uniform of the R.A.F., with long trousers and the natty little field service cap. That cap certainly does not suggest a "Brass Hat." There is no gold braid on it at all, and there is nothing about it to distinguish a King from an acting Pilot Officer on probation. One almost felt grateful to Sir Edward Ellington for sticking to his peak with the gold oak leaves and so adding a touch of brilliance and colour to the scene. Of course, there were the Guards' colours of red and blue on the Rapide—and that suggests a reflection. The Guards belong to the

# THE KING AIR

*His Majesty, Travelling Unescorted  
Northolt, Mildenhall*

Army. Perhaps some day His Majesty will assume chief command of some section of the Royal Air Force, and will use its colours on his aeroplanes. He has been, and presumably still is, Hon. Air Commodore of the Auxiliary Air Force, and that suggests possibilities. Some day, it may be, a very good squadron will qualify for the title of "The King's Own."

On Wednesday last the King's tour consisted of visits to four stations chosen to represent four main Air Force activities. Northolt is a fighter station, Mildenhall a bomber station, Wittering is a Flying Training School, and Martlesham Heath is the experimental and testing station of the R.A.F.

The Rapide first landed at Northolt, where Air Marshal Joubert de la Ferté, commanding No. 11 (Fighter) Group, was presented to the King. At Northolt there were assembled No. 1 (F) Squadron with their Furies, No. 111 (F) Squadron with their Gauntlets, and the Display Flight of No. 19 (F) Squadron, also with Gauntlets. There the Fury pilots gave an exhibition of a "quick get-away," and when in the air they were attacked by the Gauntlets of No. 111 F.S. The dog fight is dead, we are told, but it makes a pretty show. The King and the Duke had not been at the Hendon Display, so the aerobatics of Flight Lieut. Broadhurst and his two comrades came as a novelty to them, and undoubtedly were very highly admired. The Royal party then flew on to Wittering and



At Wittering: The King with Air Commodore C. W. Breese, C.B., A.F.C., during his tour of inspection. Wittering is the home of No. 11 Flying Training School.